

WORD OF ADVICE.

"Tis the custom to prate of the sadness,
The sins and the sorrows of life;
But I'd rather speak of the gladness
And beauty with which it is rife.
For the darkest of clouds has its lining,
The hardest of labor brings sleep;
Neath the rocks there is gold for the mining,
And pearls may be found in the deep.

Is it better to sip of life's nectar,
Or purposely drink of its gall?
Would you willingly walk with a spealer,
If angels would come at your call?
Would you rather have sunshine and light-
ness,
Or darkness and gloom in your dreams?
As for me, I would cherish the brightness
With which the whole universe teems.

Look around and behold the earth's glory—
The mountains, the river and plain;
For they tell us an exquisite story,
The burden of Nature's refrain.
How the Father of love, in His kindness,
Has given us more than we know;
Though we throw it aside in our blindness,
And reap of the pain which we sow.

But, to harvest the best of life's treasure,
One lesson must early be learned,
That we give to each other a measure
Of what our best efforts have earned.
Then, my children, I pray you be ready
To search, as you go, for the flowers,
And to share what you have with the needy,
For thus you'll have blessings in showers.
—A. E. Ross, in N. Y. Independent.



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CHAPTER XVII.—CONTINUED.

"Angus Bruce's sister!" exclaimed Herbert, with a start. "What, woman, marry the sister of a—of Black Beard, the pirate! What put that in your head? What ails you, Mag? What do you mean? How knew you that Angus had a sister?"

"Oh, I've seen her often. She used to go to school in Wilmington, and has often been in your uncle's house. Miss Fannie knows her well. She is a young lady now; older than she is, and is said to be the handsomest girl in Smithville, and now that her brother had to leave home for the murder of your uncle, a murder which you and I know he didn't commit—"

"Mag! Mag! what do you mean?" said Herbert, springing to his feet and glancing hurriedly around the room. "Nothing, honey, nothing; why, there ain't no one here—no one knows but you and I that it was you that killed ole marster."

"Mag! Mag! on your life don't say that again."

"Why, marster, I meant no harm. I jes' thought 't would be a good plan if you'd marry her. You see, no one would ever suspect you then."

"How should anyone ever have suspicion of me?"

"Why, you know how wimmen folks are. They never believe that their own brothers or husbands could commit a crime, and they are always looking for some one else to saddle it on, and as you was the only man in the house at that time, besides Angus, you should be the one that they would suspect—I'm bound they don't believe Angus did it."

"Everyone else does, Mag."

"Yes, all but us two."

"Don't say that again, Mag! They surely can't doubt that Angus is a pirate, with \$100,000 offered for his head."

"If I could go down there once, marster, I'd soon find out what they thought. I only want the man that is goin' to bring some of my children to me before I die, to protect himself."

"Thanks, Mag; I know you're all right, and I will think of that scheme, but it's not the pirate's sister that I will wed."

"Who then, marster?"

"You said, Mag, that there were but two young ladies here."

"Yes, marster, but you couldn't—no, you wouldn't—marry ole marster's daughter?"

"Couldn't! Why couldn't I?"

"Because—because, marster—how could you?"

"But you forget the other lady, Mag."

"The other lady? What? That would have been ole marster's bride, Miss Clara Hill? No, no, marster; not that. Ole marster'd haunt you."

"Why, Mag! Mag! what ails you?"

"I'm skeered for you, marster, that's all."

"Yes, Mag, it's Clara Hill that will be your mistress; just the same as though your old master had lived. Surely you don't object to her?"

"No, marster. It's for you to say, if her bein' about don't mind you too much of ole marster, that's all."

Herbert had drunk his hot Scotch. "Good-night, Aunt Mag! I'll be home from his chair, and went upstairs, with a mind anything but undisturbed, and little sleep visited his eyes that night."

"What could Mag have meant," he thought, "by that expression about my marrying Jennie Bruce? Did she, could she, imagine that I sought the sister of Black Beard for a wife? Or is she meditating treachery against me? Scarcely that; she relies on my hunting up some of her children. So I will! So I will! Mag must be kept satisfied! She says that the women think that their brothers and husbands can commit no crimes—why, then, Clara I hope will think so of me. Should Mag go to Smithville, she might ascertain that the family of Bruce are thinking of this matter, but what matters it to me what they think? If Bruce stopped there going out, which evidently he did, and left the cook, he certainly told his mother and sister that he was not guilty of the murder, and that I was—if so, why have they not been heard from before?"

"He doubtless told them that all of the circumstances pointed to him, and that to remain would be to hang for the murder—still, I can't understand their silence—it is unnatural."

"Then, if Bruce heard Mag scream, he must have told them that, but he also

told them, if he did, that a negro's oath would not save him—even if Mag could save him, she would not do it, if in doing it she had to condemn me; perhaps it would be best to send her down, and find the drift of their sentiments."

"I can trust her. That was a master stroke, thinking about hunting up her children—at least I will think of it."

When Mag heard her master ascend the stairs and close his door, she sunk on her knees before the fire.

"Marster! ole marster! do you think Mag is forget—no, honey, Mag ain't forget, but Mag can't see her way clear. You can rest easy, though, marster, for the woman that would have been my misses if you had lived, will never be my misses now. Since Angus Bruce turned pirate, marster, I don't know how I'll bring Herbert Lathrop to jests, but I'll do it, marster, I'll do it—if a nigger's oath won't count, a nigger can cut, and shoot and kill. Herbert Lathrop thinks his soft talk 'bout huntin' my chillen bought Mag over. Don't you believe it, marster! don't you believe it! I don't want my chillen to belong to a murderer. I'll 'member, marster; I'll 'member! and Herbert Lathrop shall be brought to jests."

CHAPTER XVII.

"COULD HE, COULD A MURDERED MAN, DO THAT?"

It was fully two hours later than usual when Herbert Lathrop descended the stairs the next morning, after having informed Mag of his coming marriage with Miss Hill, nor did he appear much refreshed.

Slumber had not closed his eyes until the night was well spent, and then his sleep was of that nature that it rather exhausted than refreshed, for it was troubled with fitful dreams in which his murdered uncle, Angus Bruce, Clara, his intended, and Aunt Mag, all played their parts.

He had been at the old home in Wilmington—he was down at the bank, altering his uncle's will.

"What, but \$5,000 to your nephew? Make it 50, uncle, make it 50—another cipher will do it—now change that five to 50—there, it's done."

"Hold! let me look to the windows and doors, no one must witness this. The witnesses' names are attached to the deed already—who are they? Strange and Bligh! Why! they were both lost at sea—what an administrator named? The space left vacant, and no bond required? Herbert Lathrop, you were born in luck—there, now, the name's filled in, put the papers back just as I found them, now lock the safe—that much is accomplished."

"Now to slip out and close the bank. But why slip out? I work here often nights, what made me say that?"

"Now the bank door is closed. When next it opens there will be black craps fastened there."

"Ah, Angus Bruce, you will escape suspicion; the murder must appear the work of burglars. Why, here's a bar open; a horn of brandy will stiffen my nerves."

"What! Angus Bruce just on the corner! Fortune favors me—a letter from my cousin—wish to see my uncle. Certainly, captain; follow me."

"Now we are in the library. No trouble, captain, if you don't see him to-night; you may not see him before he leaves on his wedding trip."

"Uncle John! Uncle John!"

"What is it, nephew?"

"Capt. Bruce is here and wishes to see you particularly."

"I have retired, nephew, but tell Angus to enter my room."

"Now, upstairs! Upstairs!"

"Fannie! Fannie!"

"Yes, cousin."

"Angus Bruce is below with a letter to you from Clara."

"Tell Angus I will be down at once."

"Now open the trunk—the sheath knife! I have it in my hand—ah, but the blade is keen and long—kick off these shoes and put my slippers on; now off with my coat, roll up that sleeve, the blood might stain it—my uncle's blood!—it's too late to hesitate now, the will is changed. A drink of brandy and one look in the glass—why, how pale I am—now softly, softly, down the stairs—the bathroom door is open, I am inside; there stands Bruce before my uncle, who is sitting on the bedside."

"If she tells me, Angus, that she weds me but to satisfy her father's demand I will return to Wilmington a single man."

"So, so, then Clara does not love you, Uncle John, but Angus, Angus! and she shall not wed him, but your nephew, Herbert Lathrop—can I get behind Bruce without his seeing me? Yes, yes! softly but quick, here I am—now under Bruce's arm—clutch the handle tight—drive hard—home! home to the hill; now fly!"

"That cry! that cry!"

"I have you, Mag! I have you!"

Herbert sprang from the bed, the cry still on his lips; the big beads of perspiration pouring from his body—shaking and quivering in every limb.

"My God! My God! how horrible! Why, it's but a dream—this bottle will live me up a bit; that came of Mag's talk last night. Perhaps I will sleep now."

He closed his eyes, but uninterrupted by the dream kept on.

"Mag, you're a nigger; you can't testify—a word and I'll kill you. Silence, and I'm your friend—I'll buy your children. It was Bruce, Mag; remember it was Bruce. Now I'm back in my room. Ah! a drink, quick! quick! That was Fannie's door; I'll join her on the stairs, and we will view the scene together. What's that? Murder! murder!"

"We enter the door; there's Bruce turning from the bedside, with the bloody knife in his hand. It couldn't be better—what a look of horror on his face. I'll call it a fiendish look; there's Uncle John leaning back on the bed, and blood, blood! everywhere. Look again; Fannie screams and faints."

"Angus Bruce, you have murdered my uncle!"

"Liar! This is your scheme. It is you that murdered him."

"Call the officers! Call the officers!"

"Scoundrel! Ah! you are after me! Slam the door! Slam the door! Now watch—there he goes, now for the sheriff!"

"What, Bruce! a pirate—Black Beard—and \$100,000 for his head! Better; better yet. I hope he'll soon be killed, killed dead—dead men can't talk."

"I am a planter, I own Kendall. You say, squire, that Clara will be my wife? Why, that's what I've worked for. To obtain her hand was one of the objects that caused me to stain my hands with—but no, Bruce did that!"

"Clarence and Fannie marry the same day, October 10."

"What's that, Mag? Me marry the sister of Angus Bruce? You're crazy! Why, he killed my uncle!"

"No, you, you! Herbert Lathrop!"

"Mag, Mag, never say that again; some one might hear you. It's said that walls have ears. I'll buy your children and your husband, and anything you want, but don't say that again."

"Go to Smithville and see what the mother and sister of Bruce say? Well, Mag, we'll see about that—I have faith in you, for you expect me to restore your children, and I'll do it, Mag, I'll do it. I wonder if Tom Hill is all right."

"Ah, the 10th of October is here. Now, it is night, and we will walk in at the chapel door; there is the priest in his white robes, and there is Clara leaning on her father's arm. How beautiful she is—here is Fannie on my arm. What! Clarence and my cousin first? That's well. Why, now they are man and wife, and Clara and I stand before the altar."

"Who is that! Who is that! What! Black Beard? Seize the murderer of John Lloyd! What, me! Help! help!"

And from the bed leaped Herbert again, his eyes staring and his whole frame quaking.

"Thank God! Thank God! it's daylight. Not for the world would I close my eyes again. I must send Mag to Smithville; I can't stand this. Ye gods, I am whiter than these walls. What! eight o'clock? Had I waked at the usual time, I would have been spared half of that horrid dream. Why, I can hardly stand, and I am wringing wet. Aunt Mag! Aunt Mag! keep your idle thoughts at home."

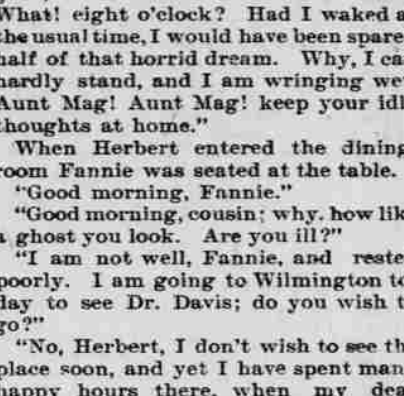
When Herbert entered the dining-room Fannie was seated at the table.

"Good morning, Fannie."

"Good morning, cousin; why, how like a ghost you look. Are you ill?"

"I am not well, Fannie, and rested poorly. I am going to Wilmington to-day to see Dr. Davis; do you wish to go?"

"No, Herbert, I don't wish to see the place soon, and yet I have spent many happy hours there, when my dear



She sunk on her knees before the fire.

father was alive. What a very fiend one must be to murder a defenseless old man. Why, father never would have dreamed that he stood in danger from Angus Bruce."

"His infatuation for Miss Hill made him desperate," said Herbert. "He could not bear that other than himself should possess her hand."

At one o'clock Herbert was in Wilmington. The principal theme of conversation there seemed to be Black Beard and his exploits, among the latest being the Beaufort and Baltimore episodes.

The Mary Lockett, an incoming vessel with funds to buy cotton, had been overhauled 15 miles from the inlet, and after seven of her crew had been slain, the pirates plundered her, securing a large amount of money, and although no man answering the description of Black Beard was seen among those who boarded and plundered her, the pirates' vessel was a two-mast schooner, and it was generally conceded that Black Beard was her master.

The Sydney K. Jones, another cotton-carrying craft, three weeks overdue, it was claimed had been plundered by the pirates, and with her entire crew sent to the bottom of the ocean.

It was argued that the days of Black Beard must be drawing to a close, unless he at once abandon the Carolina coast.

His crew, it was estimated, numbered 100 men, and was said to be composed of fugitives from justice, ex-convicts and runaway slaves.

A steamer was fitted out in the harbor, which would soon leave in quest of the pirates.

Herbert visited the old home of his uncle, which had not been entered since he had taken Fannie to Kendall; the furniture and the belongings of the house had not been removed, and everything seemed familiar.

He went up to his old room, there stood the half-empty bottle of brandy, from which he had drunk that night. He turned a glass, and drank it down, then he passed into his cousin's room; there suspended from the wall hung a painting of his uncle; he glanced at it but once, and left the room; next he passed down the stairway, and at the bottom hesitated—

"Why should I go there? Pah! I'm nervous. Why should I not? am I coward?"

He walked to the library door and entered—the door of his uncle's room stood open.

"There stands the bedstead as it stood that night when—I killed my uncle. The bloody sheet, blankets and mattress have been removed. There's where Angus stood, right opposite my uncle; there I stole in behind and struck the blow. Ah! what's that? blood! blood on the carpet yet? Hark! that scream! it was in the bathroom—there is nothing there; I am a very fool. I must leave the house before I lose my head. What's that?—a portrait, and with its face reversed. Mine! mine again! There's something wrong—everything is wrong. Could he, a murdered man, do that? Away with such an idea! Herbert Lathrop, be a man!"

He closed and locked the house and proceeded to the dock of the Sunshine, which he boarded for home.

He was seated in the cabin when Capt. Harper entered.

"You are not looking well, Mr. Lathrop. A planter's life can't agree with you. Come, try the brandy on the side-board here."

"Thanks, captain, I believe I will. I have been having chills."

"Whiskey and quinine, and plenty of it, is the only remedy I know of for Cape Fear chills. By the way, Angus Bruce seems to be giving the whole coast chills. I suppose you read of his latest exploits?"

"Yes, I read of them. You must see his mother and sister sometimes?"

"Seldom, but sometimes I meet them on the street."

"I suppose they are in great distress."

"Strange, but from appearances one would not imagine that they were crushed, though of course they are in trouble; but they bear up well. They will not speak of their troubles with anyone. To be, the nigger cook, is around as lively as ever; one would think that the course of Angus was not so much of a surprise to his own family."

"Strange," thought Herbert, "and a large sum offered for his head. I think I must send Mag to Smithville."

Herbert left the Sunshine at Orton landing and arrived home just at dusk.

SHE FOOLED HIM.

Married the Deacon and Became Sweet Tempered.

"Deacon," said the man who had been his lawyer for years, according to the Detroit Free Press, "I take the liberty of an old friend and advise you not to marry Miss Nancy Clawman. It may offend you, deacon, but I'm too loyal not to speak right out. She's a shrew, a termagant, a veritable Xanthippe. She'll make hell on earth for you."

"That note be, I ain't expectin' much from her, so she can't disappoint me much. But 'pears to me that fur a man that's been a pillar in the church nigh onter 50 years that my burdens has been too light. The river of life has run too smooth fur me. I ain't had no serious trials and tribulations. I can't see no credit in bein' a Christian under them there circumstances. Ef I kin bear up with a partner like Nancy, keepin' faith an' doin' my duty, I calculate I will a been tested an' not found wantin'."

"Why, deacon, you have a Mark Tapley disposition. But I have entered my protest and I can do no more. If you really want to be tried by fire I can conceive of no better opportunity."

The deacon had an abundance of such advice from well-meaning friends, but despite it the wedding came off. Then ears were pricked and tongues sharpened with a view of startling developments confidently expected. They were sure that the deacon would not only be henpecked, but clawed, jawed and made a slave of. But they were disappointed. Nancy proved a tender, loving and dutiful wife. Her sour visage was transformed into a pleasant, smiling face. Where her voice used to disturb the air like a cross-cut saw it was soft and sweet. The deacon was surprised if not disappointed. But it was all explained to him and no one else.

"Deacon," said Nancy. "I'm not takin' much credit to myself for bein'avin', but I'll keep it up to the end. I heard about that Xanthippe business, and I looked it up. You thought you would marry me and then put up with my tantrums. You was goin' to use my shortcomin's to help you into Heaven. I was to be the female terror and you the wise and patient Socrates. Well, deacon, I just fooled you and all the rest of 'em. You can't make no cross out o' me an' then git the recordin' angel to give you credit for carryin' it."

Failed But Once.

"Don't be afraid. Come right in—my wife out. Have a little something? Here's a nice quality of old—"

"Good heavens, man, you've got the wrong bottle! Look at that label! Don't you see it's marked 'Poison!'"

"Oh, that's all right. That saves it from the hired girl. My own invention, you know. Clever, isn't it? Never failed but once."

"How was that?"

"Hired girl couldn't read."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Tired of Running.

Mrs. Kiduff—Oh, yes, I have a running account at Cottons and Tapes. It is much better than paying for each little purchase, you know.

Mrs. Skidmore—A running account. Why, the collector of the firm told my husband that your account had been standing a very long time.—Tit-Bits.

A Drawback.

She—But he has such a delightful way of saying things—quite a poetic temperament.

He (a rival)—Yes, he has soirings after the infinite, and divings after the unfathomable, but he never pays cash.—N. Y. Journal.

—Less than 700 years ago, or say 20 generations back, each person now living had ancestors numbering over 1,000,000. Nine generations back his ancestors numbered over 1,000.

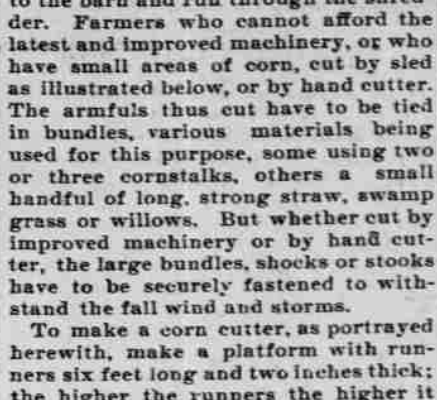
AGRICULTURAL HINTS

THE CORN HARVEST.

Labor-Saving Devices Have Made Its Gathering Easy.

Harvesting the corn crop is being made easier every year by improvements in labor-saving machinery and devices. Large commercial crops are cut, tied and left in straight rows by the improved corn harvester, while the bundles placed in shocks or stooks of 12 to 20 bundles to cure are then drawn to the barn and run through the shredder. Farmers who cannot afford the latest and improved machinery, or who have small areas of corn, cut by sled as illustrated below, or by hand cutter. The armfuls thus cut have to be tied in bundles, various materials being used for this purpose, some using two or three cornstalks, others a small handful of long, strong straw, swamp grass or willows. But whether cut by improved machinery or by hand cutter, the large bundles, shocks or stooks have to be securely fastened to withstand the fall wind and storms.

To make a corn cutter, as portrayed herewith, make a platform with runners six feet long and two inches thick; the higher the runners the higher it



HOMEMADE CORN CUTTER.

will cut; eight-inch plank should do. Mortise three crosspieces of two by four into top of runners. Nail boards on cross ties to make a platform 30 inches wide and nearly six feet long. Get a good steel knife and make it very sharp, say 22 inches long and five inches wide. Bevel the edge from the bottom or underside. Have a rod made with an eye in the center and curved, in order to fasten either end to a runner and hitch a horse in the center. This rod should be of one-half inch round iron, and long enough to work nicely, as shown at a. Bore a hole in platform or runner, and put in a stake about six inches high (b) even across with the base of rod (c). Another stake of the same size, but 20 inches high, on the right side of platform near the edge, and 21 inches from the front of platform (d). Take a rod of five-eighths inch iron 67 inches long and weld a piece of flat iron one-half inch thick and eight inches long to the end of it, bolt the flat piece to platform (13 inches from center to back of platform), and bend the rod forward 17 inches above the platform, as in e. Bend the rod so as to have it extend out over the edge of the platform, over and back of the knife (h), then bend the rod in so as to extend about two inches over the platform at the center two by four cross brace (f). From there bend the rod out to g. Be sure to have it carry the same height all the time.

The bends in the rod are made in order to bring in the corn and lay it across the platform without the help of a man. In this way the danger of standing over the knife is averted. Nail a small stick something like a lath from top of stake d to the outside runner a few inches ahead of the knife. Bolt the knife to platform about 26 inches from back part of platform with two bolts, and have the knife slant back considerably. I put a scrap piece of two-inch plank under the platform at e and h, to make the platform more solid where the large rod and knife were bolted fast. The large rod from g to e should be with bends 50 inches long. Directly across it is 48 inches, thus using two inches for bends. The large rod is outside of stake d about five inches. Hitch on a quiet horse, hang the lines on d and ride on rear of platform, and when a large pile of corn is cut and laid across the sled, stop and shock it up.—Farm and Home.

WOMEN AS FARMERS.

Peculiar Scheme to Be Unaugured by a Nebraska Woman.

Mrs. Hattie N. Bemis, of Arabia, Neb., does not see why women should not be successful as farmers, and announces that she is going to try the experiment if she can get a dozen women to assist her. She owns a large tract of land in northwestern Nebraska which she says she intends to give to 12 deserving widows of northwestern farmers. In return she will require them to cultivate it without man's assistance. She says she will start them out with all the machinery they need, a sufficient supply of cattle, horses, swine and poultry to serve as a nest egg, and money to last them until the first harvest can be disposed of. She admits that the climate is dry, but proposes to instruct her wards in the operation of a system of soil culture by which method experiments have proved the rainfall of the section is sufficient to insure bountiful crops. The nearest the women will be allowed to come to dealings with men is to sell the crops to them. If Mrs. Bemis ever learns that a man has been employed about the premises the farms will revert to her. Any member of the community who marries will also forfeit her title to a share in the property.—Chicago Chronicle.

Maintaining the Standard.

One of the causes of the deterioration of flocks of poultry is the practice of selling off the old hens and using pullets. Pullets will probably lay more eggs than will hens the first year, but chicks hatched from eggs laid by pullets are not as strong and vigorous as those produced from eggs laid by hens. It is also less expensive to retain the hens than to feed the pullets a whole year before they are old enough to lay. Hens are serviceable until five years old, and sometimes longer. The stock being less liable to disease and loss of vigor if cocks 18 months old and hens over two years old are used for breeding purposes instead of pullets that are mated with cockerels.

HIGH-CLASS POULTRY.

Why the Progressive Farmer Will Raise No Other Kind.

No man has a better chance to keep high-class poultry than the farmer. He has unlimited range for them, and this is conducive to health and best results in rearing the young. He produces at first cost every necessary food product that goes to keep a flock during the year, and no one who desires to purchase eggs for hatching would ever buy of a breeder who keeps his fowls penned up if he knew where he could get eggs from farm-kept fowls.

There is just as good a market for high-class poultry as there is for poultry for market, and the demand is always good for good stock. The farmer who keeps this kind of poultry has two chances to make money. His flock will be profitable as an investment at market prices, and he will make many sales without effort at much above market prices.

It is no trouble at all, as the writer knows from experience, to get from 50 cents to one dollar a dozen for eggs from high-class hens during the hatching season, and even at the smaller price there is an immense profit in the business.

With the better care that is always given to good stock comes a greater return in eggs and meat for the feed used, and here is an additional profit on the transaction.

There is no excuse in these days that justifies any farmer in allowing his flock of hens to remain mongrels. The man who does this is standing in his own light and does not live up to his opportunities. It does not need fancy houses, elaborate systems of yards nor extraordinary skill in breeding to make a success with fine poultry. Plain, hard common